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2 June 1953

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR MEMORANDUM NO. 42-53

SUBJECT: Condensation of Article Concerning Personnel Administration

The following paragraphs are taken from a condensation of an address by Lawrence A. Appleby, President, American Management Association, which was published in PERSONNEL for May 1953:

"Personnel administration guides human resources to the attainment of pre-determined objectives, to the satisfaction of those served, and with a high degree of morale and sense of attainment on the part of those rendering the service. Our effectiveness in reaching such an objective varies in direct proportion to our understanding of human nature, to our appreciation of human values, and to our recognition of human dignity. Personnel administrators are devoting their lives to trying to make the highest teachings of religion and the finest precepts of education work in the every-day lives of individuals. Can anyone think of any higher calling?

"There are those who think of personnel administrators as "do gooders," welfare workers, sentimental Santa Clauses, technicians, efficiency experts, glorified clerks, etc. Possibly they have gained these concepts from ignorance, hearsay, or from actual experience with certain types of personnel administrators. No one of them, however, is acceptable.

"A good personnel administrator is first and foremost an individual of the highest executive caliber. He is one who appreciates the social, economic, and political environment in which his organization operates. He knows that the welfare of the individual members of his organization is dependent upon its economic health. He knows that the economic health of the institution is represented by profits or surplus, depending upon its character. He has a deep, moving conviction from which he cannot be shaken that profit or surplus can be maintained over long periods of time only when services and products of a high quality are made available to the consuming public for prices at which they will buy. He knows that this can be maintained only when the individual members of the organization are producing to their utmost and doing so because they want to, are proud to, and because they are highly satisfied with what they are contributing to the over-all result and with what they are getting in terms of their own attainment.

"The good personnel administrator is both a persistent and a patient kind of chap who, at the same time, is a diplomat and a salesman. Beyond that, he is well enough informed and skilled to be able to supply what he sells, to service it, and to prove it out.

"The personnel administrator is usually a sensitive type of person. He is sensitive to the reactions of other people. Some may interpret this as

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temperament but, actually, it is concern. He is a perfectionist at heart, but wisely compromises in the light of human frailties. There are times when everything is right in the world and he whistles and sings and floats on air, and there are other times when he is so low that he would have to get a step-ladder to reach the edge of a curbstone. This is sometimes interpreted as moodiness, but it is usually a reflection of concern.

"Having spent so much of my own life in personnel work, I may be allowed to believe that it is the most important work there is affecting the work relationships with people. I happen to believe also that it is the most difficult--without authority but with a great deal of responsibility. Other people have to be influenced to do what appears to be right. Without adequate measurements for determining savings and profits accruing from good personnel administration, many measure it only by what it costs. Even though its motive is to help people, there are many times when the circumstances of the situation result in people being hurt. The objectives are so high that they are seldom reached.

"Despite the difficulties of the job, there are great rewards. While the financial rewards for people in personnel work are increasing steadily, the non-financial incentives are by far the greatest.

"An individual must maintain self-respect. That is fed to a large extent by what others think of him and his work. More than ever before, and with a growing degree of intensity, top and fellow executives have a high regard for the work of personnel men and rely heavily upon their counsel and help. Even those who may outwardly oppose the personnel administrator's efforts have a deep respect for what he is trying to do. Those in personnel are looked upon very favorably by the workers. They see them as people who are interested in their welfare and who are trying to help them in their own work and lives.

"Greater than all of this is the terrific satisfaction that comes from the attainment of some particular objective for which the personnel administrator has been the pioneer, the missionary, the sponsor, and the worker. When one looks over a span of years and sees something in practice within a company for which he at one time suffered because of its absence, it does something to him.

"Because personnel work is among the highest of missions in life, because its motive is to help people and to furnish opportunities for the realization of their fullest potential in character, personality and productiveness, because it contributes tangibly to the successful attainment of the objectives of operating executives, it enjoys great prestige, and success in it is wonderfully satisfying.

"Personnel administration has followed a long, hard road. We all know the history of it so well there is no use to review it here. What is significant is that it has now come into its own. It has now become an absolute necessity that organizations provide adequately for the human resources for which they are responsible. Managements are becoming more and more conscious of the direct relationship between the adequacy of personnel programs and competitive survival.

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"While over the last several decades, great emphasis has been placed upon good personnel administration for workers, and while that emphasis will not decline in any way, there is going to be over the next four or five years greater and greater emphasis upon executive personnel administration. There will be much more demand for constructive work in organization planning and management development.

"While relations with organized labor have gone through the blood and brimstone stage of development, we are now entering an age of maturity in management-labor relations. The methods of even a decade ago are now outmoded. It will take big people to handle the problems of the future. Big people will have to be handled on a high plane.

"Many techniques of personnel administration such as employment, placement, training, wage and salary administration, employee benefits, have been developed and accepted. They are going to be subject to constant change, and a great deal of research will have to be conducted in brand-new methods and practices.

"While technological development has been emphasized in the past, the great developments of the future will be in the realm of human resources. The pace of development in this area during the next ten to twenty years will make the rapid technical developments of the last twenty years look slow.

"This all means greater attention to human research. What makes people tick? Group dynamics, human motivations, human satisfactions, the ethics of human relationships, the realization of human potential, are all the concern of the future. The atomic scientist is the symbol of the past; the human scientist will be the symbol of the future."

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GEORGE E. MELOON
Personnel Director

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